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## ***Via Certified Mailing - Return Receipt***

November 9, 2012

Richard Cunningham - Owner and Registered Agent  
Vallejo Boat Works, LLC  
One Harbor Way  
Vallejo, CA 94590

City Council / City Manager  
City of Vallejo  
555 Santa Clara Street  
Vallejo, CA 94590

**Re: Notice of Violations and Intent to File Suit Under the Federal Water  
Pollution Control Act ("Clean Water Act")**

Dear Owners, Operators and/or Facility Managers:

## **NOTICE**

This Notice is provided on behalf of Northern California River Watch ("River Watch") in regard to violations of the Clean Water Act ("CWA" or "Act") 33 U.S.C. § 1251 *et seq.*, that River Watch believes are occurring at the Vallejo Boat Works marine repair and maintenance facility located at One Harbor Way in Vallejo. Notice is being sent to Richard Cunningham, Vallejo Boat Works, LLC and the City of Vallejo (collectively, the "Dischargers") as the responsible owners, officers, operators or managers of this facility and the underlying real property. This Notice addresses the violations of the CWA including violation of the terms of the General California Industrial Storm Water Permit and unlawful discharge of pollutants from the Vallejo Boat Works facility into the Napa River.

CWA § 505(b) requires a citizen to give notice of intent to file suit sixty (60) days prior to the initiation of a civil action under Section 505(a) of the Act. Notice must be given to the alleged violator, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency ("EPA"), and the state in which the violations occur. As required by the CWA, this Notice provides notice of the violations that have occurred, and continue to occur at the Vallejo Boat Works facility. Consequently, the Dischargers are placed on formal notice by River Watch that after the expiration of sixty (60) days from the date of this Notice, River Watch will be entitled to

bring suit in the United States District Court against the Dischargers for continuing violations of an effluent standard or limitation, permit condition or requirement, or Federal or State Order or Plan issued under the CWA in particular, but not limited to CWA § 505(a)(1), the Code of Federal Regulations, and the Basin Plan, as exemplified by the incidents of non-compliance identified and outlined in this Notice.

The CWA requires that any Notice regarding an alleged violation of an effluent standard or limitation or of an order with respect thereto shall include sufficient information to permit the recipient to identify the following:

1. *The specific standard, limitation, or order alleged to have been violated.*

To comply with this requirement, River Watch notices the Dischargers of the ongoing violations of the substantive and procedural requirements of CWA § 402(p) and violations of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System ("NPDES") Permit No. CAS000001, State Water Resources Control Board, Order No. 92-12-DWQ as amended by Order No. 97-03-DWQ, the General California Industrial Storm Water Permit ("General Permit"), relating to marine facility services for the maintenance and repair of vessels.

Vallejo Boat Works filed a Notice of Intent or "NOI" agreeing to comply with the terms and conditions of the General Permit. The NOI was approved by the State Water Resources Control Board on or about October 23, 2002 and Vallejo Boat Works was assigned Waste Discharger Identification ("WDID") number 248I017547. River Watch contends that in the operations of the Vallejo Boat Works facility, the Dischargers have failed and are failing to comply with the terms and conditions of the General Permit requiring the preparation, implementation, review and update of an adequate Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan ("SWPPP"), the elimination of all non-authorized storm water discharges, and the development and implementation of an adequate monitoring and reporting program.

The 2007-2008, 2008-2009, 2009-2010, 2010-2011, and 2011-2012 Annual Reports submitted by Vallejo Boat Works to the State Water Resources Control Board and Regional Water Quality Control Board demonstrate that Vallejo Boat Works failed to adequately sample for pollutants that have a reasonable potential of being present in discharges from the Vallejo Boat Works facility, including pollutants listed both in the California Toxics Rule (40 C.F.R. part 131) applicable specifically to regulated facilities identified by SIC Code 3732 such as copper and zinc, as well as EPA Benchmarks. Compliance with the CTR and EPA benchmarks illustrate whether Vallejo Boat Works implemented Best Management Practices ("BMPs") by the use of the Best Available Technology Economically Achievable ("BAT") and Best Conventional Pollutant Control Technology ("BCT"). In addition to failing to fully sample for required pollutants, Vallejo Boat Works obtained and reported just two (2) water quality samples rather than the full complement of ten (10) during the five (5) reporting years 2007-2012. Vallejo Boat Works' repeated statement in the Annual Reports that it did not, because of the timing of rain events, have the "opportunity" to collect the

mandated two samples during any of the past five years is contradicted by the evidence of reported sampling by other facilities in close proximity to Vallejo Boat Works that are also covered under the General Permit and reported to the State and Regional Boards.<sup>1</sup>

In sum, Vallejo Boat Works has failed and is failing to eliminate discharges of non-authorized storm water from its facility. Complaints from citizens have alleged discharges from this facility are not being filtered, captured, or measured. Non-storm water discharges to adjacent waters are frequently seen. Based on information thus far received, River Watch believes pollutants including, but not limited to, paint, oil and grease, fuel, solvents, solid waste, chemical waste, biological material, garbage, dirt, dust, and metals (including copper and zinc) are discharged from vessel repair and maintenance operations

2. *The activity alleged to constitute a violation.*

River Watch has set forth narratives within this Notice describing discharges of pollutants from marine facility services and operations at Vallejo Boat Works to waters of the United States in violation of the General Permit and CWA § 301(a). These narratives describe with particularity specific incidents which may not have been reported in public reports and other public documents in the Dischargers' possession or otherwise available to them. River Watch incorporates by reference the records cited in this notice from which descriptions of specific incidents were obtained.

3. *The person or persons responsible for the alleged violation.*

The persons responsible for the alleged violations are Vallejo Boat Works, LLC, Richard Cunningham and the City of Vallejo, referred to herein collectively as "the Dischargers".

4. *The location of the alleged violation.*

The location of the various violations is the permanent address of the facility at One Harbor Drive in the City of Vallejo, California 94590, including the adjoining waters of the tidally influenced Napa River, Mare Island and Carquinez Straits, and San Pablo Bay – all waters of the United States.

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Note that the report of storm events by the National Weather Service Forecast Office for "Downtown San Francisco F-6" ([http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/mtr/SFD\\_F6/sfd\\_f6.php](http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/mtr/SFD_F6/sfd_f6.php)) demonstrates that Vallejo Boat Works had sufficient opportunity to have conduct the full complement of 10 water quality samples during the period 2007-2012.

5. *The date or dates of violation or a reasonable range of dates during which the alleged activity occurred.*

The range of dates covered by this Notice is from November 9, 2007 to November 9, 2012. River Watch will from time to time update this Notice to include all violations which occur after the range of dates covered by this Notice. The majority of the violations are continuous in nature, therefore each day constitutes a violation.

6. *The full name, address, and telephone number of the person giving notice.*

The entity giving notice is Northern California River Watch, P.O. Box 817, Sebastopol, CA 95472, referred to throughout this Notice as "River Watch." River Watch may be contacted via email: US@ncriverwatch.org, or through its attorneys. River Watch is a non-profit corporation organized under the laws of the State of California, dedicated to the protection and enhancement of the waters of the State of California including all rivers, creeks, streams and groundwater in Northern California.

River Watch has retained legal counsel with respect to the issues set forth in this Notice. All communications should be addressed to:

Jack Silver, Esq.  
Law Offices of Jack Silver  
David Weinsoff, Esq.  
P.O. Box 5469  
Santa Rosa, CA 95402-5469  
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## **STATUTORY BACKGROUND**

CWA § 301(a), 33 U.S.C. §1311(a), prohibits the discharge of any pollutant into waters of the United States, unless such discharge is in compliance with various enumerated sections of the Act. Among other things, Section 301(a) prohibits discharges not authorized by, or in violation of, the terms of a NPDES permit issued pursuant to CWA § 402(p), 33 U.S.C. §1342. CWA § 402(p), 33 U.S.C. §1342(p), establishes a framework for regulating storm water discharges under the NPDES program. States with approved NPDES permitting programs are authorized under this section to regulate storm water discharges through permits issued to dischargers and/or through the issuance of a single, statewide general permit applicable to all storm water dischargers. Pursuant to CWA § 402, the Administrator of the U.S. EPA has authorized California's State Water Resources Control Board to issue NPDES permits including general NPDES permits in California.

The State Water Resources Control Board elected to issue a statewide general permit for industrial discharges, and issued the General Permit on or about November 19, 1991, modified the General Permit on or about September 17, 1992, and reissued the General Permit on or about April 17, 1997, pursuant to CWA § 402(p).

In order to discharge storm water lawfully in California, industrial dischargers must comply with the terms of the General Permit or have obtained an individual NPDES permit and complied with its terms.

The General Permit contains certain absolute prohibitions. Discharge Prohibition A(1) of the General Permit prohibits the direct or indirect discharge of materials other than storm water ("non-storm water discharges"), which are not otherwise regulated by a NPDES permit, to the waters of the United States. Discharge Prohibition A(2) prohibits storm water discharges and authorized non-storm water discharges that cause or threaten to cause pollution, contamination, or nuisance. Receiving Water Limitation C(1) of the General Permit prohibits storm water discharges to any surface or ground water that adversely impact human health or the environment. Receiving Water Limitation C(2) prohibits storm water discharges that cause or contribute to an exceedance of any applicable water quality standards contained in a Statewide Water Quality Control Plan or the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board water quality control plan.

In addition to absolute prohibitions, the General Permit contains a variety of substantive and procedural requirements that dischargers must meet. Facilities discharging, or having the potential to discharge, storm water associated with industrial activity that have not obtained an individual NPDES permit must apply for coverage under the General Permit by filing a NOI. The General Permit requires existing dischargers to file NOIs before March 30, 1992.

Dischargers must also develop and implement a SWPPP. The SWPPP must comply with the standards of BAT and BCT. The SWPPP must, among other requirements, identify and evaluate sources of pollutants associated with industrial activities that may affect the quality of storm and non-storm water discharges from the facility and identify and implement site-specific BMPs to reduce or prevent pollutants associated with industrial activities in storm water and authorized non-storm water discharges [Section A(2)]. BMPs must implement BAT and BCT [Section B(3)]. The SWPPP must include: a description of individuals and their responsibilities for developing and implementing the SWPPP [Section A(3)]; a site map showing the facility boundaries, storm water drainage areas with flow pattern and nearby water bodies, the location of the storm water collection, conveyance and discharge system, structural control measures, impervious areas, areas of actual and potential pollutant contact, and areas of industrial activity [Section A(4)]; a list of significant materials handled and stored at the site [Section A(5)]; a description of potential pollutant sources including industrial processes, material handling and storage areas, dust and particulate generating activities, and a description of significant spills and leaks, a list of all non-storm

water discharges and their sources, and a description of locations where soil erosion may occur [Section A(6)]. The SWPPP must include an assessment of potential pollutant sources at the facility and a description of the BMPs to be implemented at the facility that will reduce or prevent pollutants in storm water discharges and authorized non-storm water discharges, including structural BMPs where non-structural BMPs are not effective [Section A(7), (8)]. The SWPPP must be periodically evaluated to ensure effectiveness and must be revised where necessary [Section A(9),(10)].

The General Permit requires dischargers to eliminate all non-storm water discharges to storm water conveyance systems other than those specifically set forth in Special Condition D(1)(a) of the General Permit and meeting each of the conditions set forth in Special Condition D(1)(b).

As part of their monitoring program, dischargers must identify all storm water discharge locations that produce a significant storm water discharge, evaluate the effectiveness of BMPs in reducing pollutant loading, and evaluate whether pollution control measures set out in the SWPPP are adequate and properly implemented. Dischargers must conduct visual observations of these discharge locations for at least one storm per month during the wet season (October through May) and record their findings in their Annual Report. Dischargers must also collect and analyze storm water samples from at least two storms per year in compliance with the criteria set forth in Section B(5). Dischargers must also conduct dry season visual observations to identify sources of non-storm water pollution in compliance with Section B(7).

Section B(14) of the General Permit requires dischargers to submit an "Annual Report" by July 1 of each year to the executive officer of the relevant Regional Water Quality Control Board. Section A(9)(d) of the General Permit requires the discharger to include in their annual report an evaluation of their storm water controls, including certifying compliance with the General Permit. *See also* Sections C(9), C(10) and B(14).

The EPA has established Parameter Benchmark Values as guidelines for determining whether a facility discharging storm water has implemented the requisite BAT and BCT. 65 Fed. Reg. 64746, 64767 (Oct. 30, 2000). California Toxic Rule limitations are also applicable to all non storm water and storm water discharges. (40 C.F.R. part 131)

The Regional Water Quality Control Board has established water quality standards for the San Francisco basin. This water quality control plan, or "Basin Plan," includes a narrative toxicity standard and a narrative oil and grease standard. The Basin Plan provides that "[w]aters shall not contain suspended material in concentrations that cause nuisance or adversely affect beneficial uses." The Basin Plan establishes limits on metals, solvents, pesticides and other hydrocarbons.

## REMEDIAL MEASURES REQUESTED

River Watch believes that implementation of the following remedial measures are necessary in order to bring the Vallejo Boat Works facility into compliance with the CWA and reduce the biological impacts of its non-compliance upon public health and the environment surrounding the facility:

1. Prohibition of the discharges of pollutants including, but not limited to, paint, oil and grease, fuel, solvents, solid waste, chemical waste, biological material, garbage, dirt, dust, and metals (including copper and zinc) from vessel repair and maintenance activities.
2. Compliance with the terms and conditions of the General Permit, and BMPs detailed in the EPA's Industrial Stormwater Fact Sheet Series, Sector R: Ship and Boat Building or Repair Yards" (EPA Office of Water, EPA-833-F-06-033, December 2006; ([www.epa.gov/npdes/pubs/sector\\_r\\_shipbuilding.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/npdes/pubs/sector_r_shipbuilding.pdf))).
3. Compliance with the storm water sampling, monitoring and reporting requirements of the General Permit.
4. Sampling of storm water at least four (4) times per year over the next five (5) years: at "first flush"; the first significant rain after first flush; the first significant rain after April 1; the second significant rain after April 1.
5. 100% of the discharge from the Vallejo Boat Works' site and facility must be discharged through discrete conveyances.
6. Any discharge from the Vallejo Boat Works' site and facility to a water of the United States must be sampled during the four (4) sampling events identified in paragraph #4 above.
7. Preparation and submittal to the Regional Water Quality Control Board of a "Reasonable Potential Analysis" for the Vallejo Boat Works site and its operations.
8. Preparation of an updated SWPPP including a monitoring program, with a copy provided to River Watch.

## CONCLUSION

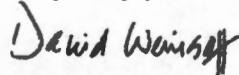
CWA §§ 505(a)(1) and 505(f) provide for citizen enforcement actions against any "person," including individuals, corporations, or partnerships, for violations of NPDES permit requirements and for unpermitted discharges of pollutants. 33 U.S.C. §§1365(a)(1) and (f), § 1362(5). An action for injunctive relief under the CWA is authorized by 33 U.S.C.

§ 1365(a). Violators of the CWA are also subject to an assessment of civil penalties of up to \$32,500 per day/per violation for all violations occurring through January 12, 2009, and \$37,500 per day/per violation for all violations occurring after January 12, 2009, pursuant to Sections 309(d) and 505 of the Act, 33 U.S.C. §§ 1319(d), 1365. *See also* 40 C.F.R. §§ 19.1-19.4.

The violations set forth in this Notice effect the health and enjoyment of members of River Watch who reside and recreate in the affected community. Members of River Watch use the affected watershed for recreation, sports, fishing, swimming, hiking, photography, nature walks and the like. Their health, use and enjoyment of this natural resource is specifically impaired by the violations of the CWA as set forth in this Notice.

River Watch believes this Notice sufficiently states grounds for filing suit. At the close of the 60-day notice period or shortly thereafter River Watch has cause to file a citizen's suit under CWA § 505(a) against the Dischargers for the violations of the CWA described in this Notice. During the 60-day notice period, River Watch is willing to discuss effective remedies for the violations identified. However, if the Dischargers wish to pursue such discussions in the absence of litigation, it is suggested those discussions be initiated soon so that they may be completed before the end of the 60-day notice period. River Watch does not intend to delay the filing of a lawsuit if discussions are continuing when the notice period ends.

Very truly yours,



David Weinsoff

DW:lhbm

Attachment: Map

cc: Administrator  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Ariel Rios Building  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N. W.  
Washington, D.C. 20460

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U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 9  
75 Hawthorne Street  
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